

IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, in this application.

1. (currently amended) A cell comprising a vector containing a gene encoding a protein made of an amino acid sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO: 2 or amino acid sequence ranging from 394-position to 532-position in the amino acid sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO: 2, ~~or a protein made of an amino acid sequence in SEQ ID NO: 4 or amino acid sequence ranging from 396-position to 534-position of the amino acid sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO: 4,~~ wherein a Toll-like receptor 3 is expressed in the cell.
2. (original) A cell as set forth in Claim 1, wherein the cell is a human fibroblast, a human dendritic cell, a human intestinal epithelial cell, or mouse fibroblast.
3. (previously presented) A screening method for compound for inhibiting binding of Toll-like receptor 3 and the protein, the method comprising the steps of:
causing a candidate compound to be in contact with the cell as set forth in Claim 1 and checking whether the protein and Toll-like receptor 3 bind to each other or not.
4. (previously presented) A therapeutic agent for treating a disease that is able to be ameliorated by enhancing Type I interferon production, the therapeutic agent containing the cell as set forth in Claim 1.
5. (previously presented) A therapeutic agent as set forth in Claim 4, wherein the disease is cancer or a viral infectious disease.
6. (original) A therapeutic agent as set forth in Claim 5, wherein the cancer is hepatoma, kidney cancer, juvenile pharynx villous tumor, malignant lymphoma, cerebral tumor, glioblastoma, medulloblastoma, astrocytoma, or dermal malignant melanoma.

7. (previously presented) A therapeutic agent as set forth in Claim 5, wherein the viral infectious disease is hepatitis B or hepatitis C.

8. (currently amended) A therapeutic agent for treating a disease that is able to be ameliorated by enhancing Type I interferon production, the therapeutic agent containing a protein made of an amino acid sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO: 2 or amino acid sequence ranging from 394-position to 532-position in the amino acid sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO: 2, ~~or a protein made of an amino acid sequence in SEQ ID NO: 4 or amino acid sequence ranging from 396-position to 534-position of the amino acid sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO: 4~~, wherein a Toll-like receptor 3 is expressed in the cell.

9. (currently amended) A therapeutic agent for treating a disease that is able to be ameliorated by enhancing Type I interferon production, the therapeutic agent containing a vector containing a gene encoding a protein made of an amino acid sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO: 2 or amino acid sequence ranging from 394-position to 532-position in the amino acid sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO: 2, ~~or a protein made of an amino acid sequence in SEQ ID NO: 4 or amino acid sequence ranging from 396-position to 534-position of the amino acid sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO: 4~~, wherein a Toll-like receptor 3 is expressed in the cell.

10. (currently amended) A therapeutic agent for treating a disease that is able to be ameliorated by enhancing Type I interferon production, the therapeutic agent containing a cell containing a vector containing a gene encoding a protein made of an amino acid sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO: 2 or amino acid sequence ranging from 394-position to 532-position in the amino acid sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO: 2, ~~or a protein made of an amino acid sequence in SEQ ID NO: 4 or amino acid sequence ranging from 396-position to 534-position of the amino acid sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO: 4~~, wherein a Toll-like receptor 3 is expressed in the cell.

Claims 11-22 (canceled)

23. (new) A protein made of an amino acid sequence ranging from 394-position to 532-position in SEQ ID NO: 2 or an amino acid sequence ranging from 394-position to 532-position in SEQ ID NO: 2 in which one or more amino acids are replaced, deleted, inserted and/or added, and having a property of specifically binding to mammalian Toll-like receptor 3 and a property of inducing type I interferon production.

24. (new) A protein made of an amino acid sequence ranging from 396-position to 534-position in SEQ ID NO: 4 or an amino acid sequence ranging from 396-position to 534-position in SEQ ID NO: 4 in which one or more amino acids are replaced, deleted, inserted and/or added, and having a property of specifically binding to mammalian Toll-like receptor 3 and a property of inducing type I interferon production.

25. (new) A gene encoding the protein as set forth in Claim 23.

26. (new) A gene encoding the protein as set forth in Claim 24.

27. (new) A gene as set forth in Claim 25 having the base sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO: 1 ranging from 1242 to 1658 bases.

28. (new) A gene as set forth in Claim 26 having the base sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO: 3 ranging from 1251 to 1667 bases.

29. (new) A recombinant expression vector having a gene as set forth in Claim 25.

30. (new) A recombinant expression vector having a gene as set forth in Claim 26.

31. (new) A transformant cell transformed with a recombinant expression vector as set forth in Claim 29.

32. (new) A transformant cell transformed with a recombinant expression vector as set forth in Claim 30.

33. (new) A protein made of an amino acid sequence ranging from 394-position to 532-position in SEQ ID NO: 2, wherein proline at 434 position is replaced with histidine, and having a property of specifically binding to mammalian Toll-like receptor 3 but abnormality in a property of inducing type I interferon production.

34. (new) A gene encoding the protein as set forth in Claim 33.

35. (new) A recombinant expression vector having a gene as set forth in Claim 34.

36. (new) A transformant cell transformed with a recombinant expression vector as set forth in Claim 35.